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## BOOK REVIEWS

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*The Condition and Tendencies of Technical Education in Germany.* By ARTHUR HENRY CHAMBERLAIN. Syracuse, N. Y.: C. W. Bardeen, 1908. Pp. 108.

*Technical Education* is a brief but very complete classification and account of the industrial and technical continuation schools of Germany.

The chief function of the schools is viewed as vocational training. The commercial demand for such training is naively accepted as the sufficient reason for their being and the psychology of manual work in the schools is not considered.

While we may not agree with Mr. Chamberlain in the very few deductions which he makes, and though the book is very poorly printed, it is an exceedingly valuable report of existing conditions in the home of vocational schools.

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*Father and Baby Plays.* By MILLIE POULSSON. Illustrations by FLORENCE STORER. Music by THERESA GARRISON AND CHARLES COMICH. New York: Century Co., 1907.

The modern awakening of parenthood and the strong interest in the child-study movement has been steadily gaining ground under the influence of the mothers' congress, the parents' and mothers' clubs of schools and the general trend of modern pedagogical literature. No one has done more to further this, in a simple, sympathetic way, than Miss Millie Poulsson with her insight into the child's needs and her power of putting these so that the "grown-up" must feel their importance.

In this book of *Father and Baby Plays* Miss Poulsson has given us a charming collection of verses and games which would tempt any father to stray into the world of baby play. They are so natural that they are almost a spontaneous expression of the things that the right kind of father would do without teaching—but being arranged in an interesting and related order, they suggest a purpose and meaning that would not be seen otherwise. The music is simple and attractive, and not the least interesting parts of the book are the well-chosen selections and suggestions which precede each group of plays. Among the best of these little songs are, "Funny Fishes," "Chasing Speck-o' Dirt," "Two White Ducks," "The Rabbit," "The Squirrel," "The Trotting Plays" and "The Shadow Plays," while of the lullabys "Gapo," "Nid, Nod," and "Slumberee" are such as all mothers will want to use.

It is true that the relation between the Father and the Baby might easily be less beautiful if it became self-conscious, no matter how thoughtful or educational it was. As Professor Royce says there are limitations to the too thoughtful

attitude of mind. Only the most highly developed intelligence will carry us as freely as wholesome instinct. But used as suggestively as Miss Poulsson has intended, this book will prove to be a delightful inspiration to many fathers, will educate many others in ways that they would be chary of entering on undirected, and will give many little children happy hours of fun and frolic.

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*Merry Animal Tales.* By MADGE BIGHAM. Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1908.

*Stories to Tell to Children.* By SARA CONE BRYANT. New York: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1908.

These are two books of stories for children, collected and edited by Miss Bigham and Miss Bryant; and both the compilers have included advice and suggestions for the teacher, though in Miss Bigham's book it consists only of a few pages of explanatory notes.

The *Merry Animal Tales* have a good deal of spontaneity and the action and interest do not drag, but there is a doubtful wisdom in taking away an old friend's individuality of appearance, however attractive the new dress may be, and these tales are our old friends, the well-worn fables—thirty-seven of them, adapted from La Fontaine and put into prose in the form of a series of stories in which continuity is preserved by introducing the several incidents into the lives of a family of rats.

The fables are enlarged, the terse, pithy sentences which find their way into the memory become long conversations, and the whole has a somewhat artificial setting. The teacher is advised to use seat work of a rather mechanical kind to illustrate these stories in a way in which their value as literature would be still more lost. It is true that these suggestions might give a new impulse to the teacher in the rural districts that are mentioned, but possibly this impulse might be aroused in a more valuable way.

The stories to tell to children collected by Miss Bryant will be found useful by many teachers and her suggestions about telling stories are even better than the stories themselves. Miss Bryant's point of view is very sound and her criticisms are direct and helpful. The stories are collected from many sources and are often new and interesting. The story of Epaminondas has already become popular, and several of the others bid fair to follow suit. The serious criticism to be passed on both these books is that the style is not finished and the construction is often weak. The English in many instances is crude and unsatisfactory, "I guess," "Hurry up," "Right here," and so forth, being common expressions, and there is a certain affectation of the child's talk in one or two of Miss Bryant's which endangers their sincerity. The books of stories for children are improving each year. But it is earnestly to be hoped that our clever collectors and editors, of whom there are so many now-a-days, will in time study English composition and literature more thoroughly and develop that fine taste which alone can give us the best editions of books for children.

ALICE O'GRADY